

Typical Koreans, a shopkeeper and her daughters exemplify cultured gentleness and joy that hide an amazing inner strength and endurance. (See Father John Corcoran's article, page 31.)

## *Self-reliance*

Our people are now looking for the right leaders who will lead us to the bright light of hope for the future. To have this great desire realized, a new leaven is needed. Who will be the leaven for our people? Who are they who will pray daily for God's laws to be fulfilled, for justice and peace to reign, for unity to be realized? It is we, ourselves.

Stephen Cardinal Kim of Korea, announcing the observance of the 150th anniversary of Seoul Vicariate, attended by a crowd of 800,000 people last October.

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Koreans are as old and rich as their 5,000 years of culture.

Text by Joseph R. Veneroso, M.M.  
Photos by Eric L. Wheeler

## Korea, land of contradictions

**Its people are both spiritual and earthy, and can teach others how to thrive despite adversity**

To many Americans, Korea conjures up harsh images: rugged mountains, fierce battles, crying orphans. Some recall the Tungsan Park scandal or think of Reverend Moon. To others, South Korea is a showcase of economic recovery, albeit with a less than democratic government in constant confrontation with one of the world's most belligerent communist regimes to

the north. But images are misleading and Korea is much more than just a label on shirts and skirts or incidental background to television's popular M\*A\*S\*H series.

Behind the oriental mystique and the stereotypes, Korea reveals herself not so much as some enigma to be analyzed as an experience to be savored, a mystery encountered in

(Clockwise from top): Gathering rice seedlings for transplanting; Sisters' choir at 150th anniversary of Seoul vicariate; pigs' heads at a market; the symbol for harmony (*Um-Yang*); a welcome to "honored guests."







Korean farmer and his wife enjoy their rugged life.

### **Korea, land of contradictions**

the lives and struggles of her people. Koreans embody the Eastern concept of *Um* and *Yang*, the complementarity of opposites, the co-existence and acceptance of contradictions. The concept both baffles and captivates, frustrates and fascinates foreigners. Fiercely nationalistic, Koreans are nonetheless attracted to things Western. Their well deserved reputation for cour-

tesy is often accompanied by an unconcealed curiosity for anything different, strange or interesting.

Koreans can be profoundly spiritual one minute and unashamedly earthy the next. Similarly, their high Confucian ideals, especially loyalty and filial piety, are matched by a willingness, indeed a determination, to enjoy life and the good things of the earth here and now. There is little a Korean would not sacrifice in order to save face, feelings, friendships and family.

Overly preoccupied with status and station by Western standards, Koreans at the same time are delighted by the downfall of the powerful and the victory of the underdog. They value education and learning so highly that few opportunities are wasted. At the heart of Korean society is the family; yet lest anyone feel left out, titles of uncle, aunt, brother or sister are generously tossed about to make the visitor truly feel at home.

Yes, Koreans are indeed a people of contradictions. They are as young and poor as the factory workers who put up with long hours, tedious work, unsafe conditions and ineffective government-controlled unions so that the nation might prosper and continue to be competitive. Koreans are as old and rich as the "5,000 years of Korean culture" which they proudly exhibited in major U.S. cities. History has taught them how to cope with contradictions.

Wedged between China, the Soviet Union and Japan, and of strategic importance to the U.S., the Korean people are no strangers to invasion and foreign interference. Animosity for the Japanese runs especially deep and goes back for generations. They have never forgiven Japan for the decades of rule when Koreans were forbidden their own language, deprived of their own customs, even stripped of their own names.

Tragically, even liberation in 1945 did not result in liberty. The superpowers divided the peninsula along the 38th parallel, in effect condemning Koreans to years of conflict. Families and friends were separated, perhaps forever, by an

arbitrary border imposed upon them from abroad. Today only the dream of ultimate reunification unites this people.

While South Koreans gratefully recall the assistance rendered by the U.S. to check the communist ag-



## Korea, land of contradictions

gression in 1950, their gratitude is tempered by the realization that it was American insensitivity which acquiesced in the initial partition of their people. Despite this and official U.S. support for a series of increasingly repressive dictatorships, most South Koreans still remain staunchly pro-American.

Christianity has enjoyed phenomenal success on the Korean peninsula. It is the only country in the history of the Church to start evangelizing itself, via trade contacts with China, years before the arrival of the first foreign missionaries. A long and bloody period of persecutions gave Christianity firm and healthy roots within the

Korean consciousness. In 1984 Catholics will celebrate the 200th anniversary of the arrival of the faith. Protestants that same year will celebrate their centennial. Together Christians number at least 4 million people, or approximately 10 percent of the population.

Yet, in spite of guaranteed freedom of religion, the age of martyrs has not passed. South Korean jails contain many Christians of conscience whose crime was giving an interpretation of events contrary to the government's. Violation of laws upholding "national security" resulted in the arrest or disappearance of thousands, including Kim Dae Jung, the opposition presidential candidate now serving a sentence of life imprisonment, and Kim Chi Ha, celebrated Catholic

Father Tom Egan, Oil City, Pa., is welcomed by mother and baby alike.







Father Joe Veneroso, Amsterdam, N.Y., celebrates a home Mass.

poet released last year. Ironically, this same pretext was used to all but obliterate Christianity north of the demilitarized zone.

It is difficult for Americans to comprehend that harassment, detention, beatings, torture and death are weapons used to silence the opposition not only by communist countries but by our supposed allies, aided and armed by the U.S. When the popular uprising in Kwang Ju was brutally suppressed with American approval, Koreans' confidence in the U.S. was deeply shaken. Just what the response of Christians should be is a question

which has sharply divided the Catholic Church in Korea and severely compromised its effort to proclaim the message of Christ with one voice.

On the one hand, in the light of the reality of the communist threat to the north, some maintain that a certain curtailment of freedom is necessary. They hold that a strong government, even a dictatorship, is the only safeguard against future invasions.

On the other hand, there are those who claim that Gospel imperatives take precedence, that injustice and tyranny are to be op-



## Korea, land of contradictions

posed regardless of the source. They point out that repressive policies and abuses of power are the very things which make communism repugnant and should therefore be rejected as detrimental to democracy.

Thus, the greatest danger facing the Church in Korea is neither a communist threat of annihilation nor persecution under a para-military dictatorship, but rather a self-imposed silence in the face of injustice and spiritual paralysis for fear of imprisonment.

## On the side of the poor

On occasion confrontative and at times cooperative with the government, Cardinal Stephen Kim is trying to lead the Church on a course midway between collision and collusion. Church attendance is up, adult converts are many and seminaries are filled. Korean religious and countless laity are translating their faith into acts of compassion, sacrifice and solidarity with the poor and outcast.

The Koreans, especially Catholics, have much to share. They can teach us not merely how to survive, but how to thrive in a world of contradictions. □

*Father Veneroso, Maryknoll missionary from Amsterdam, N. Y., has been serving in Korea since 1978.*

Stephen Cardinal Kim leads the Church in Korea on a fine line between collision and collusion.



Father James Najmowski conducts a wake service in a home.

Wheater

By Patrick Bergin, M.M.

## Maryknoll in Korea

**Special bonds of love and respect exist between Korean people and missionaries who work with them**

The *Yen Do*, a melodious prayer for the dead, chanted by 100 Korean Catholics filled the chapel at Maryknoll, N.Y. Some of the more than 110,000 Koreans who have immigrated to the New York area had

come last September to pay final respects to Maryknoll missionary Joseph W. Connors—Father Kwon to his Korean friends. Then, as tears of sorrow mingled with the prayers of hope and resurrection, they celebrated Mass in Korean for their beloved pastor who had served them for 34 years in Korea.

A different—yet similar—story is told by Ellen Carey, Maryknoll

## Maryknoll in Korea

lay missionary from St. Paul, Minn., now working in the Seng Nam area of Seoul. Caught late one night without an umbrella in pouring rain, she had pulled a thin jacket over her head and was unable to catch the words between a mother and daughter as they passed. "Probably laughing at the dumb foreigner," Ellen told herself. She was chagrined when the daughter came running after her and pressed an umbrella into her hand, saying graciously, "We have two umbrellas and you have none."

Both stories tell something of the bond that exists between the Ko-

rean people and the missionaries who work with them. And despite the Korean superstition that a child not be called "beautiful" lest it be carried off by jealous spirits, I hazard the observation that the Korean experience—measured in terms of love given and received—has been one of Maryknoll's success stories.

Begun in 1923, Korea is second oldest, after South China, of Maryknoll's mission areas and the longest continuous presence (excluding

(Clockwise) left to right, top: seminarian Dick Hitchcock, Apostolic Pro-Nuncio Luciano Angeloni, Father Tom Egan, lay missionary Jim De Mott; Father Dick Rolewicz lends a hand; Fathers Charles Robak and Brendan Fullam (pointing) plan a new parish.

Now retired, Father Wilbur Borer founded Sacred Heart School for the Blind.

Vail





## Maryknoll in Korea

World War II years) in any country. Those early years were an era of vast territory and few missionaries. Some 30 Maryknollers in the Vicariate Apostolic of Pyongyang covered an area approximately one quarter of present North Korea. Ten to 15 outmissions per parish were typical, like the parish of Sin Ui Ju where Father Hugh Craig of Minneapolis worked alone on the Manchurian border.

Maryknoll Sisters first went to Korea in 1924 for catechetical work and to open a dispensary and home for the elderly. In the late 1930s, Sister Mercy Hirschboeck, a doctor, and Sister Rose of Lima Robinson, a pharmacist, began the medical work that was to gain such prominence during the Korean War and in the years since.

From the start, great numbers of converts came into the Church.

One reason was that missionaries, both Protestant and Catholic, seemed to be the only persons interested in the well-being of the Korean people who were then under oppressive Japanese rule. Forced to speak Japanese, Koreans were allowed their own language only in the home and church. By translating the Scriptures, the Protestant churches encouraged the use of *Han Gul*, the Korean language.

All foreign missionaries, except Germans, were expelled during World War II. When the war ended in 1945, the Korean Church immediately invited Maryknoll back—only this time to South Korea below the 38th parallel that now divided the nation. Fathers Roy Petipren and John Coffey of Detroit and Pat Cleary of Ithaca, N.Y., resumed their work with other Maryknollers in three parishes in Seoul and five in the outlying countryside.

Peace was only temporary. The ravages of war which had bypassed

Father Fred Krampert helps workers discover their common goals.

Wheater





Maryknoll Sister Patricia Arathuzik assists Maryknoll Sister-Doctor Anna Boland at Cheong Pyong clinic.

the nation during World War II struck with a vengeance in 1950 when North Korean armed forces invaded South Korea. Within hours, tens of thousands of refugees fled south toward Pusan. Staying at their posts in Seoul, Maryknoll Bishop Patrick Byrne, the Vatican's Apostolic Delegate to Korea, and his secretary, Maryknoll Father William Booth, were captured by communist troops. Bishop Byrne died November 25, 1950, of mistreatment suffered by prisoners of war on the infamous Korean Death March. Father Booth endured three years in a North Korean prison. No trace was ever found of Maryknoll Sister Agneta Chang, a Korean, who disappeared in the early days of the war.

As refugees poured into Pusan, the Maryknoll Sisters set up an outpatient clinic in an alley for the 1,500 to 2,000 people per day who came seeking help. (That clinic later grew into one of the finest hospitals in Korea; Maryknoll turned it over to Korean Sisters in 1970.)

Maryknoll Father George Carroll coordinated emergency welfare efforts with Catholic Relief Services. So many people were helped in those days that another Maryknoller later wrote: "The average Korean came to know two things about the Catholic Church: priests don't marry and George Carroll runs everything."

After the Korean Armistice in 1953, the Holy See divided Seoul Vicariate. With two new vicariates

## Maryknoll in Korea

entrusted to Maryknoll, the Vatican named Father James Parady from Brooklyn to be first Bishop of Chung Chong Putko and Father

Wheater



Father William O'Leary, from West Orange, N.J., always has time to listen to old and young friends.

William McNaughton of Lawrence, Mass., Bishop of Inchon. Maryknollers in the Diocese of Pusan administered three parishes under Korean Bishop John Choi.

With approximately 150 Maryknoll priests, Brothers and Sisters involved, the postwar years were

again an era of great Church growth. Bishop Parady dedicated 19 new parishes in 15 years. In the two parishes I directed, adult converts were steady at 70 to 80 per year. Other pastors reported years of 400 to 500 adults baptized.

Social work also prospered. Seeing poor families exploited by merciless moneylenders charging exorbitant rates of interest—often 30 percent monthly—Maryknoll Sister Gabriella Mulherin of West Scranton, Pa., helped found a credit union. Today, with over 820,000 members in 1,500 branches throughout South Korea and assets over \$300 million, it is the largest credit union in Asia and totally under Korean administration.

Such transition is the goal of Maryknoll's work and is being realized perhaps better today in Korea than anywhere else in Maryknoll regions. Although Maryknoll added parishes in the dioceses of Seoul, Masan and Suwon to its care in the last decade, the mission society also turned over to Korean priests 17 parishes in Inchon, 11 parishes in Chong Ju, three in Pusan and two in Masan.

Countrywide the number of Catholics increased 75,000 in 1980 to 1,360,000 (3.4 percent of the population of South Korea). Along with the total Protestant Church affiliation, Christians of all denominations now total more than 10 percent of South Korean people—far and away the largest Christian percentage of any country in Asia, other than the Philippines. □

*Father Bergin, from Michigan, served in the missions of South Korea from 1959 to 1979.*





Korean couples assemble in Seoul for national Marriage Encounter convention.

By Donald D. MacInnis, M.M.

## A loving way of life

**Marriage Encounter strengthens national and international bonds, as well as family relationships**

"The greatest hope for our two countries coming together is through Marriage Encounter," wrote Akira and Hideko Tanaka of Japan to their hosts after the Korean Marriage Encounter national convention. Having gone to Seoul with some trepidation because of the centuries-old bitter enmity between the two countries, the Tanakas reported that "no political organization can create the feelings of

acceptance and warmth that we experienced with you."

While heralding the political power of Marriage Encounter may be a bit premature, from my experience in Korea I would wholeheartedly agree with Akira and Hideko that this movement which aims to increase communication, faith and love among married couples also has tremendous missionary possibilities for promoting harmony among people.

But I must admit that I didn't know what to expect in 1974 when I made my first Marriage Encounter with couples from New England

## A loving way of life

gathered at the Oblate Retreat House in Natick, Mass., for the 44-hour experience of in-depth dialogue between husband and wife. Chick Karpells, who with his wife Edwina was one of the leader couples, urged me to introduce Marriage Encounter to Korea.

"Marriage Encounter is not just a weekend," Chick explained, "it's a way of life. Through the Encounter, husband and wife learn to listen to one another and to respond to the needs they discover. In the same way, by living out the sacrament of matrimony, they also learn to listen and to respond to the needs of the people around them." Chick Karpells has since died, but his words live on in my experience.

To tell the truth, however, when I

returned to Korea I wasn't sure we could get Marriage Encounter off the ground, much less use it to revitalize Christianity. I might have laid it aside were it not for Good Shepherd Sisters Eileen Robinson and Rose Virginia Hayes who were giving religious instructions to U.S. military families in Korea. The missionary Sisters introduced me to two couples, Jim and J'Ann Allen and Chuck and Carol Hodell, who had made a Marriage Encounter in the States. U.S. Army Chaplain Jerry Worman urged us to put on a weekend for his parishioners. He even arranged for two American couples stationed in Japan—Jack and Judy Konan, Dick and Ursula O'Leary—to come and lend their expert assistance.

Koreans who had at least a working knowledge of English were also invited. Then I asked Clemans and

Participants at convention in Korea: (left to right) Thomas and Regina Kim, Father Augustine Ryou, and two couples from Japan, the Tanakas and Matsudas.





TV scriptwriter Oh Vincent and Kim Perpetua, leading Encounter members.

Theresa Kim, Augustine and Angela Hong, and Michael and Marianna Park to join me in a team training weekend led by Father Charles Quinn from New York and Bill and Joann Browne from Malibu, Calif. Afterwards the three Korean couples met week after week for three months during the coldest part of the country's harsh winter to prepare for the first Korean weekend in March 1977.

When Maryknoll Father John Soltis heard that Marriage Encounters were held in Seoul, his enthusiasm spread to the couples in his parish in Inchon. It soon became a leading Marriage Encounter center in Korea and Maryknoll Bishop William McNaughton of Inchon joined a team to lead sessions on weekends throughout his diocese.

The response has been phenomenal. So far 2,500 couples in nine of South Korea's 14 dioceses have experienced Marriage Encounter and 1,500 couples already are signed up for weekends planned this year.

Many of the couples are sharing their Marriage Encounter experience through parish marriage preparation courses for engaged couples, as well as through special "evenings for parents" and "evenings for couples" programs.

Thomas and Regina Kim, the national coordinating couple for the past two years, are typical of the generosity of those involved in Marriage Encounter. Concerned about their willingness to lead so many retreats and weekends in various parts of the country, I asked Tom if production at the factory he owns was suffering because of his absence. "Quite the opposite," he laughed. "By delegating some responsibility, I've actually brought out the best in my employees."

Don Bosco Kim and his wife Alice frequently devote 25 hours a week to Marriage Encounter service. Typical of hundreds of people whose religious awakening or attitudinal change is traced directly to their first Encounter weekend, Don

## A loving way of life

Bosco is genuinely concerned about decent working conditions and fair wages for employees in the whiskey distillery he operates.

We hope to realize the missionary potential of Marriage Encounter more fully this year by awakening the Christian values within the working classes and rural families. We also hope to strengthen our international ties. With the entrance of Malaysia, nine countries now participate in the Marriage Encounter Asian Secretariat: Japan, Taiwan, the Philippines, Singapore, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, India and Korea. At international meetings, as Akira and Hideko Tanaka testify, the delegates explore ways of reaching out to one another and to poor, oppressed families within their countries.

Those ties stretch across the seas.

The love shared by Marriage Encounter families from New Jersey's South Bergen County and northern Los Angeles—through garage sales, car washes, etc.—enabled the first Korean couples to attend international meetings.

Now this love is ready to be reciprocated through service. Invitations have been received in our Seoul office from Korean emigrants now living in Los Angeles, Chicago, New York, Toronto and West Germany to come and present Marriage Encounter weekends in the Korean language. Chick Karpell's prophetic insights have come full circle—Korean couples are ready to serve as missionaries to the United States. □

*Father MacInnis, Maryknoll missionary from Portland, Maine, serves with Julio and Regina Lee as national coordinators of Marriage Encounter in Korea.*

Father MacInnis sees phenomenal response in Korea to Marriage Encounter.





Text by Stephen De Mott, M.M.  
Photos by Eric L. Wheeler

# To be holy and healthy

**Members of a cooperative stress preventing disease and working together for health and happiness**

“Health care definitely is a great way to open doors,” says energetic Sister Patricia Norton. “Total strangers come up to you and say, ‘I’ve got this lump, or I have a headache or a sore throat.’”

Maryknoll Sisters Pat Norton, from Milwaukee, and Chris Ortis, of Seattle, have opened a lot of doors since arriving in the crowded, busy fishing villages of Hu Po and Sam Yul located on Korea’s rugged, picturesque coast that drops abruptly, even dramatically, into the chilly waters of the East Sea.

Conscious of the success of small, basic Christian communities in other countries and responding to the urgent need for better and more accessible health care, the Sisters began collaborating with the families of fishermen, farmers and miners to form a Christian Community and Health Cooperative.

“We chose Sam Yul,” says Sister Pat, a registered nurse who has worked in Korea for 20 years, “because it is so isolated. Korean Sisters prefer the big cities where there are opportunities to study. In the country, things are more difficult.”

The opening of the East Sea highway has dramatically changed life in Hu Po, population 16,000, and adjacent Sam Yul, population

Sister Patricia Norton with some of the health co-op’s 366 members.





Sister Sigrid Christine Ortis at Mass in rural Korea.

4,000. The area now rumbles with passing trucks, cars and buses. Health care, however, is still struggling on the back roads.

When the Maryknoll Sisters conducted a survey in the area in 1976, they found the strongest needs to be in health counseling and health education. "In everyday language," they write in one of their reports, "it means people ignore or endure aches and pains as much as possible. They then go to a drug-store, tell their symptoms and receive a diagnosis and an envelope of pills. Maybe two years later, when a man is unable to make a fishing trip, he goes to a big city hospital and finds he has inoperable cancer and only two or three agonizing months left to live."

Members of the Christian community in Sam Yul-Hu Po believe that being healthy helps people to

be holy and happy. They formed the health cooperative because they wanted to work together to help one another be healthy. "The people are very responsive," says Sister Chris, who also speaks out of 20 years' experience in Korea.

In the summer of 1978, the Christian Community and Health Cooperative made its formal start. The core members were Christians from Hu Po. They stated their purpose as "helping the members live a deeply Christian life as well as a life of health and happiness by having concern for one another in the prevention of disease."

As time went on, non-Christian neighbors began to request membership in the Health Cooperative. The applicants, after being recommended by an active member, need the approval of the nine-member governing board. "As a new appli-



Workers dry cuttlefish on Sam Yul beach.

### To be holy and healthy

cant's name is brought up," the Sisters write, "there is either a wave of nodding or head shaking around the table in characteristic oriental fashion. Occasionally there's a brief discussion and then the decision is handed down. This is a rural area and everyone knows everyone else. From the very beginning it has been the people's work."

The present membership of the cooperative is 366, of whom two-thirds are non-Christians. A number of the non-Christians, say the Sisters, have learned of the Church

through being in the cooperative. Some have studied the faith and have been baptized. The Sisters call it a form of indirect evangelization. "Because our health work takes us into the home and to the bedside of the sick and dying," says Sister Pat, "it is an excellent opportunity to share the Gospel message with both family and patient."

Members of the cooperative are required to pay an entrance fee and monthly dues. The entrance fee is 500 *won* per person (about \$1 U.S.), but families of more than five pay no more than 2,500 *won*. Monthly dues are 200 *won* per person, but never more than 1,000 *won*





per family. "Still 1,000 *won* each month is hard for the poor to pay," remarks Sister Pat.

The cooperative's income is insufficient to meet all costs, so outside funds are needed as a supplement. The Sisters mention how people in Pusan have provided for the salary of the lay nurse for over two years. The nurse, who gave up a good job in the city to help the cooperative, says she is "enjoying the unseeable profits of the Spirit."

"A group of nurses sends us 20,000 *won* each month to help the poor pay their fees," notes one of the Sisters' reports, "but the board rejected this. Hard as it is to pay the

fee, the members must carry out that responsibility. We use the money instead to occasionally help in paying for large supplies of medicines or for emergencies."

The members of the Christian community gather for Sunday liturgy "more or less regularly," according to the Sisters. Mass is celebrated twice a month when a priest comes to the mission station and on other Sundays the people celebrate a "communion liturgy." It is all very "folksy," say the Sisters. "There are many Prayers of the Faithful, mostly mentioning problems and illnesses. Visitors or new catechumens are introduced to the congregation at the end of the liturgy. Parishioners' feast days are announced; they are prayed for and take a bow." The Sisters are trying to make the Peace Greeting more meaningful and natural to the highly formal Koreans, but they say the idea has not caught on yet.

A doctor comes once a month from Young Dok to the health center to examine and prescribe for the patients. A dentist from Pusan comes once every three months. Both donate their services. A special relationship has also been established with five hospitals that give a 20 percent discount to members when they need exams or treatment. And a communications system has been set up for the hospitals to report on their findings and the treatments prescribed, and to give advice on how to continue care at home.

In addition to treatment service, the Sisters coordinate work in health education, teach natural family planning, and conduct immunization programs for children



Sister Pat visits homes to educate families and immunize children.

### To be holy and healthy

and maternity care for mothers. "Much of our health work is done traveling around by bike rather than having the people come to the health center," says Sister Pat. "It is

easier for us to make a trip than to have the families come here, especially mothers with babies."

"People say we carry the Word of God," reflects Sister Chris, "but I have learned that the Word carries us. It takes us and propels us. Each day can be so wonderful." □

Sisters travel to rural areas to save people a trip to the center.



Text by Stephen De Mott, M.M.  
Photos by Eric L. Wheeler



Lay missionary Ken Sleyman offers nursing care and friendship at Sorok-Do.

## 'You know you're living'

**Lay missionaries working with victims of Hansen's disease find joy, kindness and friendship**

Sorok-Do, a well-known name in South Korea, is still cause for fear or pity in some and revulsion in others. Located just 600 meters off the southwestern coast of the Korean peninsula, it is a hospital island for patients suffering from Hansen's disease (leprosy). Two Maryknoll lay missionaries, Kenneth

Sleyman, 27, and Barbara Pavelka, 28, both registered nurses, have been working there with Maryknoll Sisters since 1978. They have come to know a unique side of Sorok-Do.

"I never felt repulsed by Hansen's disease, only attracted by the goodness of the people," says Barbara. When she and Ken visit the hospital wards or walk through the island's eight "villages," clusters of low, concrete and brick buildings, what she is talking about becomes evident. People everywhere hobble



Mass on Sorok-Do, with Korean tradition of women and men separated.

### **'You know you're living'**

up to them on crutches or drag themselves from their small homes to greet the two missionaries. The attraction to goodness is mutual.

Hansen's disease attacks the extremities first, causing permanent nerve damage. Many patients lose part or all of their hands and feet. Many are also blind.

"Patients often burn themselves or get infections," explains Ken, "but because of the loss of feeling they don't notice it and end up losing fingers and toes, even arms and legs." Yet, the people spontaneously reach out to Barbara and Ken, bowing in the usual Korean fashion or inviting a hug.

Barbara and Ken recently returned from India where they took a six-week doctors' course on Han-

sen's disease. Ken also worked in a small Indian factory making shoes, a skill he hopes to use in Sorok-Do both as occupational therapy and as a means of providing better footwear for the patients.

The two lay missionaries work alongside Korean doctors and nurses in the hospital on Sorok-Do, the largest in Korea for the treatment of Hansen's disease. It also has psychiatric and tuberculosis wards and a prison with some 30 convict-patients. Founded in 1916 by the Japanese who then occupied the Korean peninsula, the hospital now has 2,600 patients. They are allowed to return home once the disease has been arrested, but often they have no place to go, being ostracized by society and family alike.

When the hospital began 65 years ago, there was much ignorance and fear, reactions that have not com-

pletely disappeared. Japanese doctors trained patients to care for themselves and others, albeit inadequately, in an effort to have as little contact with the disease as possible. As a result, the patients suffered in utterly deplorable circumstances. Things are better now thanks to a competent staff of Korean medical personnel, two Austrian nurses, Margaret and Marianne, who have been long-time volunteers on the island, four Maryknoll Sisters, Catherine Cullen, Madeline Giusto, Joan Sauvigne and Kathleen Marie Shea, and the two Maryknoll lay missionaries.

Ken, relaxed and usually smiling, remembers his first six months on the island: "There was so much to do: people with holes in their feet, wounds not bandaged . . . Then I came down with typhoid." He spent two months in the hospital in Mok-Po and returned "a little more humble and accepting."

Ken, born in Rochester, N.Y., studied nursing at Shady Side Hospital School of Nursing in Pittsburgh, Pa. After graduating he applied to the American Public Health Service to work with native Americans, was turned down and later found a job at the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center in New York. "A lot of famous people go there," Ken remarks. "I even attended Martha Mitchell. But I thought about how I could work with less fortunate people." And the day Ken saw Mother Teresa on television he decided it was time to translate his thoughts into action.

Ken knew about Maryknoll through his uncle, Father Joseph Hunt, a Maryknoller who worked in Japan and died there in April of last year at age 88. (Ken flew from Korea to Japan for the funeral.) The first time that Ken traveled to Maryknoll, N.Y., he spent a few days with the Maryknoll Brothers

Lay missionary Barbara Pavelka discovers "the goodness of the people."



## 'You know you're living'

where he was struck by their expressions of friendship. He met some of the lay missionaries, asked about their program, prayed about it and finally applied.

"Adapting to the language and culture of Korea was difficult in the beginning," Ken says, "but the people here give so much. And working with Hansen's disease, you come to recognize your own 'disease.' You also discover what you can do with what you have, like patients here who actually make chairs using their mouths."

Barbara Pavelka, exuding joy and enthusiasm, says she "wanted

Guadalupe Father Fidencio Contreras is the chaplain for patients on Sorok-Do island.



to be a nurse to help people." Barb is from Minnetonka, Minnesota, studied nursing at the Methodist Hospital School of Nursing and graduated in 1974. She then worked as a nurse in the Navy for two years in Charleston, S.C. In 1977 she became a Catholic and entered the Maryknoll Lay Mission Program.

As a lay missionary in Sorok-Do, Barb feels she has found the place she has been looking for. "Here my lifestyle fits in with my mission," she says. "I'm not interested in money or fashion, but rather in prayer and service. Here it all came together for me. Everyday I experience the drama of people's lives."

Barbara tells the story of a man who discovered his 32-year-old wife had Hansen's disease. He patiently waited for her to return home once the disease was arrested, but she died during treatment. "There are also suicides and drownings," Barb continues, "but at the same time other people are living and growing. You go to the depths and then up very high. But you're living fully. You *feel* so much you know you're living."

Neither Barbara nor Ken is quite sure what the future will bring, but they are not too concerned. "I'm happy," says Barbara. "I really like it here. If you can't be happy, what kind of witness are you?"

"I'll be here a few more years," says Ken, "maybe all my life. I don't know. I still think about becoming a priest, but the honorifics like *shin boo nim* (Honorable Spiritual Father) bother me. I've gained in simplicity of life. Imagine, people on the island have all their belongings in one chest! I think I'll stay in Korea." □

Text by John J. Corcoran, M.M.  
Photos by Eric L. Wheeler

# Koreans will endure

**Their toughness and resilience  
are related to their concern  
for family, customs and friends**

I met John Kim shortly after I arrived in Incheon, Korea, in 1963. A warm, delightful, refined person, he taught me not only the language but also the culture and many of the customs of his people.

“Don’t eat while you are on the street,” he said, “that is very bad manners here. Don’t introduce yourself too quickly at a gathering, that is to be too forward.”

Several times I visited his small home, a thoroughly Korean household with well-mannered children and a wife of graciousness itself. Such balance. Such harmony. It would be easy to imagine that John Kim had been raised in a tranquil, protected environment. One day he told me the story of his life.

Born in what is now North Korea but then under harsh Japanese rule, John was in high school when World War II ended only to have the Russians arrive to impose a communist government. Then came the Korean war just when he



The tranquility found in Korean households often belies harsh experiences.

had entered medical school. To avoid conscription he hid for three months under a wooden floor.

After his father was captured, John fled south—alone. When the war ended, he was living in a tent on Pusan’s seashore; he had survived for a time on a small island, crossed to the mainland in a tiny boat and hiked 300 miles.

I was spellbound, but the extraordinary part of the story is that John’s experience is not extraordinary. I could repeat it of at least 50 Koreans I know—people who have bounced back from most serious setbacks and suffering with remarkable resiliency and gracious-



"I was impressed with the strength, endurance and resiliency of Koreans combined with

### **Koreans will endure**

ness, unbent and uncomplaining. Again, balance and harmony.

During my 16 years in Korea as first a rural and later an urban pastor, I was ever more deeply impressed with the strength, endurance and resiliency of the Korean people combined with cultured gentleness and quiet humor. The experience

convinced me that Korea and the Koreans will endure. No other people on the face of the earth have experienced such centuries-long oppression and yet preserved their basic culture and language intact in the same geographic place. This is the unique record of the Korean people who live on a peninsula jutting into the waters below Manchuria and Siberia.

The documented history of Ko-





ed gentleness and quiet humor.”

rea goes back 12 centuries before Christ. The greatest powers of the world—China, Japan, Russia, the United States—have tried and are still trying to change the Hermit Kingdom (so called after Korea tried unsuccessfully to seal off foreign influence hundreds of years ago) into their own image and likeness—without success. Left alone long enough by the superpowers, the Koreans of South and North,

divided now by the demilitarized zone but still united by language and culture, will one day overcome both of the intolerant “isms” they are now under and resume their ancient history as one people united by a powerful identity.

The toughness, endurance and resilience of Koreans spring from their sureness of what is important: personal relationships, family, village and strong customs. Nothing

## Koreans will endure

can deflect a Korean from his family, his place, or his way of life—not even modern “success” and high technology.

I once went to visit a friend of



Maryknoll Father John Corcoran spent 16 years in Korea and now is rector of Maryknoll Seminary.

mine in Oh San. Han Hak-Ki was a fighter pilot, one of the few qualified to fly the highly sophisticated F-1-11 jets, new at that time. We had an appointment to meet outside the gate of the special jet runway at the end of the base.

I arrived just in time to see my friend bring his several-million-dol-

lar plane in for a spectacular landing. He taxied over to a hangar near the gate, slid open the cockpit covering, crawled out on the wing and jumped to the ground. Seeing me, he rushed over, crawled under the gate and took me for a long walk to his grandparents' house, still dressed in his flight suit with his colorful helmet under his arm. He had forgotten about his expensive plane and was intent only on welcoming me.

## Traditions and customs

We entered the courtyard of the house and Han Hak-Ki greeted his grandfolks in the beautiful manner hundreds of years old. We sat on the heated floor, drank rice wine and had a delicious meal.

My friend was totally at home in that ancient setting, perfectly relaxed within the beautiful web of those gracious customs. What was vitally important to him were his grandparents, their home, the village and his friend; the marvel of wealth and technology, the fantastic plane and all its support systems, were peripheral to him.

I have no doubt that centuries from now the Peter Kims and the Hak-Ki Hans, wherever they are in the world, will still be completely Korean and concerned about what is very important to them: their family relationships, their customs, their friends. □

*Father Corcoran, from Middletown, Rhode Island, served as Maryknoll Regional Superior in Korea from 1972 to 1978. He is now in charge of training new missionaries at Maryknoll, N. Y.*



Father Art Rosinski teaches blind children "to see with their hearts."

**Text by Pat Simpson**  
**Photos by Eric L. Wheeler**

## Three sets of eyes

**Lack of sight need not prevent blind children from developing the eyes of their minds and hearts**

"They believe it's bad luck to see a blind person in the morning," says Maryknoll Father Arthur Rosinski, speaking of the social stigma

attached to being blind in Korea. He has headed the Sacred Heart Home and School for the Blind in Cheongju, a city of 100,000 in central South Korea, for 10 of the school's 25-year history.

The 54-year-old Maryknoll missionary is an enthusiastic talker who enjoys peppering his conversation

### Three sets of eyes

with one-liners and laughter, but he also speaks with a sense of urgency. Raised on the streets of Chicago's South Side in sight of the stock-

parents if their child is not physically perfect. Sometimes at Sacred Heart I will get a 12-year-old who has never been outside. The family had hidden the child even from close neighbors."

When blind children come to Sa-



Korea has 13 schools for a known blind population of 100,000.

yards, the son of Polish and Lithuanian parents, Art first went to Korea as a soldier in the Corps of Engineers in 1951. "I turned on to the poor," he says, explaining why he became a priest in 1962.

He never tires of talking about his school for the blind. "To have a handicapped child is considered a disgrace, an embarrassment. It's connected with guilt, blaming the

cred Heart for the first six years of schooling, they are withdrawn. Their first contact is with Maria, a frail blind Korean housemother. Her job is to cradle and rock new children. She might comfort a child for up to three months, or until trust is established.

Social development starts in the dormitory when the blind child finds a friend. He or she is no

longer neglected and alone. Waking up in the morning becomes an adventure because there is someone to talk to, someone who wants to play.

Once comfortable in the new surroundings, the child is introduced to the classroom and allowed to advance at his or her own pace. The aim is to build on successes and to eliminate frustration.

Of the over 100,000 blind people in Korea, only 1 percent are employed. All are dependent on their families or communities. Adult blind people rarely marry and usually turn to begging when there is no one to care for them.

Korea has 13 schools for the blind and three universities with special education departments. "But many who graduate don't enter the profession," says Father Rosinski. "Why? Because beginning teachers earn less than a good office worker."

### **Five-year program**

To address the need, Father Rosinski began a teacher training program. Through lectures, movies and books—the missionary has had eight books translated from English to Korean and three more are in the process—he has taken his program to the schools for the blind and to the universities. With material prepared on 15 aspects of blindness, he covers three phases a year with weekly lectures in all 16 institutions. "It will take five years to complete," says the Maryknoll priest, "and then the whole series can be started again. This seems to be the best idea I've ever had for trying to help the blind."

Because of the way Korean so-

ciety views the handicapped, raising the expectations of these blind children "would not be fair," says Father Rosinski. He doesn't urge them to study hard so they can get good jobs in the future. He tells them, "You have three sets of eyes—the eyes of your bodies so you can see where you are going and what is around you, the eyes of your mind which is called education, and the eyes of your heart which show you how to live with other human beings. You've got to develop the mind to help you see lots of things in this world. And with the eyes of your heart you will be able to see things sometimes that nobody else can see."

### **Temporary security**

Schooling for the blind in Korea is an interim period. For this time only, they are secure. They don't have to worry about finding a place to sleep or something to eat. They need not struggle for survival.

Of the 13 schools for the blind in Korea, Sacred Heart is the only one that accepts children with disabilities other than their blindness. Children who are mentally retarded or emotionally disturbed, even autistic, are welcomed.

"Every day, every minute is important," says Father Rosinski, who was recently in the U.S. to receive treatment for cancer. "I tell our teachers and housemothers to make this day the happiest that the kids have ever had. Today is very special. God only knows what tomorrow will bring them." □

*Pat Simpson is a writer in Maryknoll's Development Department.*

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Sri Lanka lures multinational corporations with low wages for workers.

*First in a series*

Text by Thomas P. Fenton

Photos by Eric L. Wheeler

## Labor at bargain prices

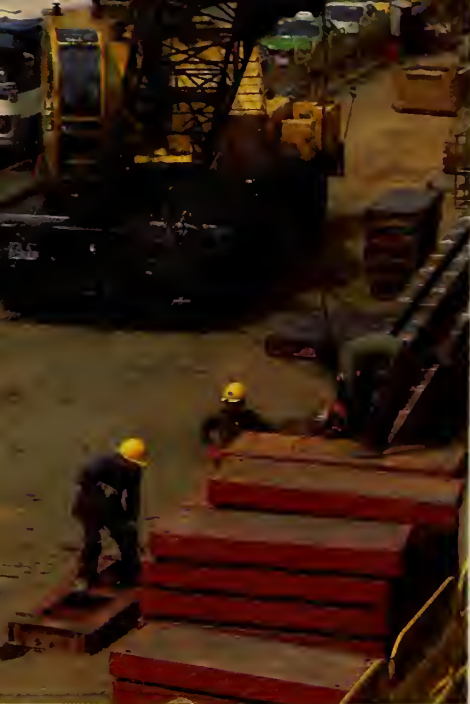
**In some Asian countries, the economic exploitation of workers is a lure to foreign investors**

“Sri Lanka’s Free Trade Zone offers 600,000 low-cost, high productivity workers,” reads the advertisement from Sri Lanka’s Investment Promotion Division. “Sri Lanka has the most competitive labor rates in Asia. The average monthly wage in manufacturing industries is only \$35. Compare your wage bill with this!”

Multinational corporations with headquarters in Japan, Britain, the United States and other countries

have responded to the Promotion Division’s challenge. They’ve compared their wage bills with the low labor costs in Sri Lanka (formerly Ceylon) and decided to take advantage of the government’s offer of 600,000 Sri Lankan workers. For the multinational company whose primary allegiance is to no national flag, the decision to take advantage of such incentives often means closing a plant in the home country.

Where once governors and chambers of commerce outbid one another to attract investors to their southern states, now presidents and boards of investment vie to lure foreign investors to the shores of



Workers in South Korea have had collective bargaining powers restricted by the government.

### Labor at bargain prices

their third world nations. And the incentive is the same: cheap and unorganized (i.e., non-union) labor.

Sri Lanka may boast of the cheapest labor in Asia, but other countries in the region are not far behind. The legal minimum wage in Thailand, for example, is \$2.25 per day for workers in Bangkok and \$1.75 in the country's northern regions. Minimum daily wages in the Philippines—set by presidential decree—range from about \$1.50 down to 95 cents depending on the work and the region.

Malaysia has no minimum wage at all, but government statistics for 1978 showed that workers manufacturing electrical and electronic

products earned between \$58 and \$84 per month. Even at these low rates, however, some companies balked at investing there because of "lack of stability in wage rates." J. Jegathesan, Malaysia's director of investment promotion for the Federal Industrial Development Authority, admitted that wages were rising to the Singapore level of just over \$2.50 per day, but, he argued, "there are still many areas in the country where workers can be found for between \$1.25 and \$1.70 a day, the prevalent wage when the semiconductor companies began to operate here in the early 1970s."

### Wage competition

Government officials in South Korea are also anxious to keep their wage rates competitive. Kim Ki-Hwan, a senior economist on the Economic Planning Board, declared that the government is doing whatever it can to hold down wages. "We want employers to treat their employees like human beings," Mr. Kim told a *Wall Street Journal* reporter last July, "but we've got to have a year of restraint to regain competitiveness."

Two Korean textile workers described for the reporter what "restraint" meant to them. Kim Chong-Gu, a 34-year-old with 15 years of experience, said he could hardly afford to feed his wife and two small children on his earnings of \$3,582 a year. Kim Young-Ok, a 26-year-old seamstress in Seoul's Peace Market district, described how she works 12 hours a day, 6 days a week, for the equivalent of \$3,225 a year. With salary of less than \$1-an-hour she struggles to



provide for her widowed mother and three siblings.

The Malaysian and Korean investment officials are learning the lesson that the governors of Michigan and South Carolina were taught years ago: the owners of the corporations call the shots. If you want their investments, then provide conditions to maximize profits: good location, favorable tax incentives and preferably non-union labor.

Representatives from National Semiconductor, Monsanto, Motorola and Texas Instruments met with leaders of Malaysia's Federal Industrial Development Authority a few years ago to make known their fears about unionization. Not

much agitation had appeared, one executive told the *Asian Wall Street Journal*, "but we wanted them to realize that if there is a possibility of that, we'd like to see them discourage it."

In any showdown, a national government usually sides with a transnational corporation against workers. A Malaysian FIDA official, for instance, was quick to allay fears of U.S. electronics manufacturers: "We're doing all we can to forestall the extension of unions to the electronics industry."

In South Korea, which is already being underbid by Sri Lanka, the Philippines and other Asian countries, actions of the government against its own working people are

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### Worker compensation in the Asian affiliates of U.S. corporations (banks excluded)

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	Developing Asia	S. Korea	Malaysia	Philippines	Singapore	Taiwan
Number of employees in affiliates of U.S. firms (includes U.S. employees)	370,324	12,898	32,159	84,894	38,536	60,315
Average annual wages per employee*	\$2,484	\$3,024	\$2,083	\$1,390	\$3,166	\$1,724
Average annual benefits per employee*	\$402	\$698	\$373	\$224	\$623	\$199
Compensation per hour for production workers in manufacturing affiliates (\$ per hour)	\$.82	\$1.39	\$.67	\$.57	\$.97	\$.68

\*These figures include the higher wages, salaries and benefits paid to technical and managerial employees, including U.S. citizens employed in Asian affiliates.

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Source: Compiled from statistics in U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, International Investment Division, *U.S. Direct Investment Abroad, 1977* (Washington, D.C., Government Printing Office, April 1981).

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## Labor at bargain prices

notorious. "Foreign investors want a stable investment climate," says one U.S. church executive who has long followed developments in Korea. "In strictly business terms, stability is a code word for economic exploitation and brutal political repression. Korean government officials and business leaders profit enormously from foreign investments and loans. For these, they'll drive their people from the farms and sell them to the lowest foreign bidder as 'disciplined' labor."

Author Timothy Shorrock observes that the Korea Exchange Bank itself has admitted that the apparent deterioration in agriculture's role in the economy "has been the result of deliberate policy priorities rather than any basic

weakness within the sector itself. Indeed, agriculture has played a crucial role in the development process . . . (as) the sector that provided the cheap labor force . . . without which industrialization would not have been possible."

The U.S. State Department's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices* (February 1981) speaks specifically of the ways in which workers have been "disciplined" in South Korea: "From 1972 until the beginning of 1980 the right to strike by private sector workers was prohibited by law although collective bargaining was encouraged. Restructuring of the trade union movement by the government in 1980 limited the ability of labor to influence economic policy and has weakened its strength in collective bargaining by restricting bargaining to local plant levels where union expertise is weakest."

Shoe vendor in Seoul street.



## Penalizing unions

The State Department report noted that the South Korean government had taken these specific actions against the labor movement in 1980: forced 11 of the 17 presidents of national trade unions to resign and prohibited them from working in their industries for three years; forced the only national union center, the Federation of Korean Trade Unions, to disband its regional organizations; prohibited the FKTU from holding national-level conventions.

If given the chance to speak publicly, Mrs. Lee So-sun would describe—in words far more graphic than those used in the State Department's report—what it is



Despite primitive conditions in small factories, workers are highly skilled.

like to be a low-cost, non-union worker in South Korea. She founded the Peace Market Union after her son, Chun Tae-il, burned himself to death in late 1971 to protest intolerable working conditions in Seoul's Peace Market garment district. Early last year the government closed the union and then arrested 12 leaders who protested the

shutdown. Mrs. Lee and another of her sons, Chun Tae-sam, were among them.

On July 13, 1981, the Seoul District Court silenced Mrs. Lee by sentencing her to 10 months in prison. Her son, who was seriously injured when the riot police broke up the union's demonstration, received a three-year sentence. □

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Factory workers in Korea average 12 hours a day, six days a week.

**Text by Stephen De Mott, M.M.  
Photos by Eric L. Wheeler**

## Sharing workers' daily life

**For a labor apostolate team, an important function is to stand in solidarity with the workers**

Maryknoll Sister Joyce Quinn was rudely introduced to the reality of workers in Inchon, Korea, at 5:30 one morning in February of 1978, shortly after she and the labor apostolate team had begun to work there. The young women at the

Tong Il textile factory had gathered between shifts to elect their union officials, but men hired by the factory began throwing excrement mixed with ashes at them. A suit filed by the girls against the factory owners has been ignored.

"If workers get together and develop awareness, they can change their situation," says team member Father Martin Lowery, Maryknoll missionary from Chicago who has

been working in Korea since 1968. Factory workers in Korea average 12 hours a day six days a week and many, especially young women, make \$3 to \$4 (U.S.) a day. Sweatshop conditions prevail and the attempts of workers to organize have been frustrated by factory owners, government regulations and incidents of violence.

In Korea's crowded port city of Inchon (population 600,000), this team of Christian missionaries for the past four years has been trying to make the Gospel as present and real as "Jesus is a worker." In addition to Sister Joyce, from Troy, N.Y., and Father Lowery, are Sister Ann Hayden, M.M., of Louisville, Ky., and a young Korean volunteer named Suzanna. Together they seek to address the needs of workers and, equally important, to be with them in solidarity.

The Sisters describe the team's work as unstructured. "It's a day by day kind of thing," they say.

"During the Tong Il textile incident, we spent days going to trials, being present, getting information out, etc.," says Sister Joyce. "We

serve as a center of information. The workers come to us and talk."

"Worker awareness is a problem," explains Sister Ann, "because of the image of workers as uneducated." Concentrating on awareness building, the team gives a series of human development workshops four times a year.

"A leadership training program helps the workers speak in public and gives them a little confidence and knowledge of the labor movement," says Sister Joyce. "These young people work all day and often don't have a chance to talk to one another. We help them to meet, to discuss their problems."

Father Lowery tells the story of a factory girl he met last year. She was afraid to get up before a group of people and say anything. Now she takes a leading role at group meetings. She speaks with confidence about herself and her situation as a worker. Says Father Lowery, "Through us she got to know others, to understand things better, and to believe in herself and her friends. We provide the opportunity to bring people together."

Works of beauty and quality often emerge from stark surroundings.





Sisters Joyce Quinn and Ann Hayden at home in Inchon, Korea.

### Sharing workers' daily life

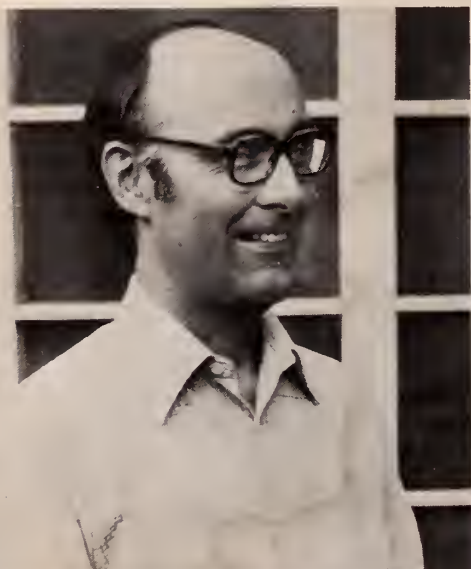
As a service to workers, the team runs a free day care center for about 20 children. The Sisters and Su-

zanna also direct a program of Bible studies for 15 Catholic women. Sister Ann, who has been in Korea for nine years, reports that the workers' wives often call themselves "industrial widows," complaining that their husbands come home exhausted after 12 hours in the factory, go to sleep and get up early to return to the job.

"Our lifestyle is an important part of our ministry," explains Sister Joyce. The two Sisters and Suzanna live in a crowded compound behind a low wall that is also home for 11 other people: two families, a young working woman and two working men. Father Lowery lives in the parish rectory.

"We decided not to lock our doors as a sign of trust," says Sister Ann, "and we have never had anything stolen. Once you lock a door you lose something."

The team would like to involve the local church more in the labor apostolate but finds it difficult. They note that parish councils often resist the Young Catholic Worker movement and the whole



Father Martin Lowery is a member of a team helping to bring workers together to improve conditions.

idea of worker consciousness. The Sisters say the parishes are often more “sanctuary” than “sign,” that is, closed in upon themselves and not present in the factory or in the world.

“Parishes are tremendously vibrant and have a lot of activities for the young,” says Father Lowery, “but they are not very aware of the role of the Church in the world. Faith is often very individualistic—God and me.”

Reflecting on the team approach to ministry among workers, Sister Joyce considers the weekly team meetings vital. “It is here we share our cooperative efforts, evaluate

the work and plan for the future together,” she says.

Each week, members of the team share their faith at Eucharist and once a year they make a retreat together. They also take time at the end of each year to reflect on their work and plan for the next year.

Words on a poster hanging in the simple room of the two Maryknoll Sisters in Inchon seem to express what the labor apostolate team seeks to accomplish among Korean workers and their families: “We just want to be there in love and in truth and in commitment to others so that we can make of this old world a new world.” □

Relaxed cyclist balances prodigious load.





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Photos by Vail

## Members memos

# Inspiration, condemnation, good feeling

### Our Lady's image

I enjoyed the story about "Our Lady of Guadalupe" (Dec. 1981), but wish something was said about Juan Diego's trip to the top of the hill where he collected roses out of season, Our Lady placing them within his robe with orders not to expose them until he saw the bishop. When Juan opened his robe before the bishop, there was the image of Our Lady. On seeing it the bishop fell on his knees, realizing that Our Lady had appeared to Juan, giving proof for building a shrine to her.

The robe is still in existence in Our Lady's Shrine in Mexico City. The image is on a cloth whose fibers usually deteriorate after about 25 years and cannot take any known method of painting.

*Francis W. Heinz  
Lawton, Oklahoma*

### Timely poems

I am a poet preparing a reading in memory of Sister Mary Benedict Dokes, H.O.M. Your November 1981 issue was an answer to my prayers. I had been searching, quite in vain, for poems of contemporary importance, spirituality and inspiration to touch my audience.

"Song of India" and "Sea of India's Great Humanity" will, I am sure, touch their hearts.

*Sandra Pianin  
New York, New York*

### The oneness of truth

Thank you for your excellent article on Hinduism (Nov. 1981). It was refreshing to read a fair and unbiased statement regarding the principles of another religion.

It is not the arrogant conquest of one religion over another that has any merit, but rather the realization of the oneness of truth.

*Jerry Pannone  
San Francisco, California*

### A disappointment

Please discontinue our membership in MARYKNOLL. I am disappointed in your so-called "social activism" in countries such as El Salvador. We will continue to pray for priestly vocations

*Edward L. Steinmetz  
Auburn, Massachusetts*

## Members memos

### In good company

From time to time we read of Maryknollers being persecuted and murdered by the military juntas and/or national guard at the behest of wealthy landowners.

After reading the September 1981 issue ("The Church in Brazil") it wouldn't surprise me if they label the Pope a communist agent.

*Jacob Randell  
Blaine, Washington*

### Uncomfortable message

My wife, two children and I recently returned from Guatemala. Your message is one that many people would undoubtedly prefer not to hear, but it is true. It accurately reflects both the difficult conditions in which so many people live in underdeveloped countries and the committed response of a concerned and very alive Church.

*John Carroll  
Duluth, Minnesota*

### Some reservations

Basically I think MARYKNOLL is excellent and you do a good job of accomplishing your purposes to show the work of the missionary and

the plight of so many peoples in so many parts of the world.

However, at times I feel some reservations with "Third World Theology," more with the way it is being practiced than with its basic Christian tenets. I see a rejection of constructive criticism and some seemingly self-righteous, judgmental and intolerant viewpoints.

What happens to Liberation Theology after the revolution?

*James F. Machen  
Toledo, Ohio*

### Finish with a smile

My wife and I began supporting Maryknoll's work almost 15 years ago. I always place my Maryknoll reminder at the bottom of my bills, so that the last check I write leaves me with a good rather than sour feeling. It makes bill paying seem a little bit easier and I am sure it is better for my health to finish with a smile and not a scowl.

*Charles J. Decedue  
Lawrence, Kansas*

The editors invite Maryknoll Members to send us their views. Write to:  
Members Memos  
Rev. Leo J. Sommer, M.M.  
Maryknoll, N.Y. 10545

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If you are enrolling a person other than yourself write your name and return address on your envelope. We would like to inform your friend of your gift.



“Let the storm . . . leave us alive and one with the land of the calm.”

Poem by Elizabeth Terbrock, M.M  
Photos by Eric L. Wheeler

## Becoming bamboo

O Land of Calm Mornings, it was a Father's hand  
that thrust the seed of me into the soil of you.  
Seed borne as all seeds—of love—but destined (thought I)  
towards grander structures of itself.  
Steel, perhaps, to be brave and firm against the  
winds of this world.  
Roots deep into concrete predictability, my face would  
rise then skyward, sprout and pierce the earth  
with sharp certainty and promise of control.  
All adventure lay before me—mighty seed! Though little  
knew I of what mystery saturates your soil—how you surround  
and birth your people from the ground beneath them,

## Becoming bamboo

and the people and all  
that they in turn create  
must need be rooted in you—the Earth.  
Rhythm, dance, thought,  
all form and color rumble  
through you till the moment they are born  
and thrust alive  
from your silent transforming womb.  
So how could I be other?  
If I should by mistake emerge  
as rhythmless as steel,  
stiff and skyscraping strength  
upon the face of you,  
measured and controlled  
by some other foreign force,  
what then of winds and storm

The symbol of *Um* and *Yang*,  
harmony and reconciliation, the  
acceptance of contradictions.



"I became . . . bamboo . . .

and all that bends and moves  
upon all that comes to birth?  
Steel, though strong,  
does rather break than bend  
and ends itself  
and takes its early death.  
Grand adventure-become-surprise  
could not fathom what change  
took place before,  
behind these eyes of mine  
which had so bravely and firmly  
plotted out  
what I would be for you.  
I became, instead, bamboo.



and when the sky fills and blows us all around, I bow but smoothly to the force. . . .”

Broad and gentle, deeply rooted, native to your soil,  
and when the sky fills and blows us all around,  
I bow but smoothly to the force and swing in strength  
to stand again, unbroken.

A dance.

Wind whirl though where it will, the courage sprouts  
along with me and each of my fibers as we dance  
to rhythms of the earth and of its people.

Survive we will,

and not because of stiffness or certainness

but rather the way we do bend

to let the storm pass its course

and leave us alive and one with the land of the calm,

and leave us alive. □

*Korea, 1981*



# Want Ads

### Street kids and love

In Lima, *Peru*, neglected children find themselves on the streets, drifting towards crime and prostitution. A pastoral program attempts to make ongoing contact with these children and to give them guidance. There is a plan to give them one week at summer camp on the beach as a welcome relief from their days of constant battle for survival. Will you help Maryknoll meet the \$2,000 cost of these vacations from struggle? \$10 would take care of one child. (1)

### A hospice for healing

There is a crying need for a hospice or half-way house for homeless and abandoned mentally ill people who roam the streets of Bogota, *Colombia*, looking for food. Often they are seriously ill and suffering from severe malnutrition. A loving temporary home would attempt to rehabilitate these people through good nutrition and health care. Will you help Maryknoll meet the \$19,000 cost for this haven from desperation with a gift of \$30? (3)

### Hot sun and rain

At the Nyamwaga mission in *Tanzania*, the Maternal/Child Health Clinic and Dispensary has been housed in half of the parish meeting hall. For some time, however, the place has been too small. The 160 patients who come for help each day often have to sit outside in the rain or hot sun. Will you help Maryknoll cover the \$20,000 cost of building an adequate new clinic? \$15 or \$20 would go a long way towards that goal. (2)

### "Stringless" gift

A "stringless" gift is one we can use wherever it's needed most. Often it's the support system which helps us continue to help troubled people. Food for children. Heat for a building. Medical supplies. Gasoline for a tractor. Travel for a missionary. A "stringless" gift helps fill these needs. Can you help with a small gift? (4)

### A more just society

The goals of the Kisii Diocese youth program in Nairobi, *Kenya*, are to assist the young in growth towards a mature Christian life. Children and teenagers are learning how to bring about a society based on the human values found in the Gospel. This is a society which is just and self-reliant, where the basic needs of all are met in mutual care and concern, and where all participate in decisions which affect their lives. Maryknoll missionaries in Nairobi need \$2,000 in emergency funds to carry the program this year. Can you help with a gift of \$20? (5)

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3E

Dear Fathers,

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**PLEASE CLIP AND MAIL THIS COUPON WITH YOUR GIFT**

By Stephen Tong Hwan Moon

# Christians work for reconciliation in Korea

**Protestant leader sees a mission to end the geographic and spiritual divisions of the Korean people**

The history of Christianity in Korea has been a marvel to the world from the very outset. The willing reception of the Gospel, the rapid growth of churches and the zealous faith of members have been extraordinary phenomena.

In general, modes of perceiving the Christian faith took two different forms in Korea as in most of the world. One is individualistic and other-worldly with a pietistic, apolitical emphasis. The other is a socially-minded, justice-oriented and world-directed understanding of the Christian faith which is strongly political.

In Korea, the former mode of the Christian faith has been dominant throughout Protestant history, while inclination to the latter is seen in the earliest stage of Korean

church history and after 1960. Unfortunately, these two trends have been in tension, decrying one another as prodigal sons.

Both Catholicism and Protestan-

Wheater



Korean Christians find in the Gospel a Master who befriends the poor, the sick and oppressed.

## Reconciliation in Korea



“When you confront social problems, your faith is much deeper,” says 80-year-old Hahm Sok Ham, a Quaker known as the Gandhi of Korea for his lifelong involvement in the nonviolent movement for Korean independence.

tism were brought to Korea by Koreans; the first by Kim Seung-hoon in 1784 and the latter by Seo Sang-yoon in 1884. From the beginning, the faith was embraced by Koreans enthusiastically and spread very rapidly. It was particularly welcomed by the lower class people (*minjung*) and dissident scholars. With the arrival of Protestant missionaries in 1885, the growth of the church was accelerated and viewed as phenomenal among mission fields. The key to this is found in the concept of *han* and the inner dynamics of Koreans.

*Han* is a state of existence when one's human rights are utterly trampled upon for a long time. In *han*, one's whole being rebels in spite of the utter futility of such action. Tormented by darkest despair, yet unable to give up hope, one rebels and shouts not only at the immediate oppressors, but also at the Ultimate Power in the universe, crying out, “It is not fair! I am a human being, too!” Crying and shouting, *han*-ridden people wait for some divine force to intervene and rectify the unjust situation.

Yet the people were left helpless. None of the existing religions was able to provide them hope. Confucianism had become an instrument of oppression by rulers. Buddhism was driven into the mountainsides by the Confucian government and was reduced to impotence. Shamanism, although it performed a pacifying role for the oppressed *minjung*, could not and would not provide any positive solution against oppressive rulers.



There were popular uprisings against the government, but some 50 of them failed toward the end of the 19th century. The picture became gloomier as the shadow of Japanese militarism equipped with Western armaments spread over the already troubled peninsula.

It is not difficult to imagine how the Korean people were attracted to Christianity. In the Gospel, they found a master who stood by the poor, the sick and oppressed and became their friend. With an immeasurable love, He gave His life, promising the Kingdom of God in which the love and justice of God is to rule.

In 1905, when the shameful Eulsa Treaty was signed with Japan, churches throughout the land were filled with Christians who poured out their sadness before their almighty Lord. When Emperor Kojong's life was threatened by the Japanese in 1907, Christians met every night in their churches and held prayer meetings for the emperor's safety. To them, love of God and love of the people and nation were one and the same thing.

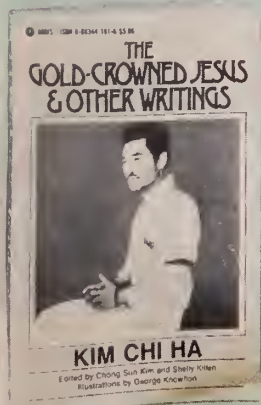
Although early missionaries to Korea were greatly impressed by

the Christians' love of their nation and people, they were also deeply concerned about their political activism. The missionaries believed in the separation of religion and politics. They were firmly convinced that Christian churches should be concerned only about religious and spiritual matters.

The nationwide peaceful demonstration for the independence of the country on March 1, 1919, surprised not only the rulers of Japanese imperialism over Korea but also missionaries who were kept in the dark. In this action, Christians were fervent participants.

As painful as the misery of life was under Japanese imperialism for the Korean people, their joy was even greater when liberation came at the end of World War II. However, the joy did not last long. The nation was divided into two hostile parts by the superpowers, the United States and Russia.

Propaganda by the two regimes slandering one another pulled the people apart. The fateful war which started in June 1950 was a logical consequence of such insanity. Furthermore, increasing tension across the demarcation line



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## Reconciliation in Korea

provided an excellent excuse for the rulers on both sides to become dictatorial. The people who had been yearning for freedom and democracy for centuries did not have a chance to mold their own future as subjects of history.

The student revolution of 1960 in South Korea which toppled Syngman Rhee's government had manifold significance. It was a clear judgment passed upon the older generation who had failed to see the meaning of the new era.

The struggle continues. Although the preachers and teachers of Korean churches presented an apolitical message, Christians never ceased to be political. The yearning for freedom and justice has been burning under a seemingly calm surface and has erupted time and again like a volcano.

Rev. Stephen Moon, a Presbyterian pastor and former professor of theology at Hankuk Seminary, Seoul.



Goodwin

Since 1960, there has been an upsurge in the Protestant churches' active participation in the *minjung's* struggle for liberation by a relatively small percentage of Christians (between 5 and 10 percent) whose influence is far greater than their numbers. The leadership has come mainly from three circles: the Presbyterian Church of the Republic of Korea (PROK), the church-related Urban Industrial Mission which helps organize workers and slum dwellers, and two student organizations under the Korean National Council of Churches—the Student Christian Federation and the Ecumenical Youth Council.

According to Rev. Ik Hwan Moon, a PROK minister who is serving a 10-year prison term for his zeal and dedication as a key member of the National Association of Human Rights in Korea, the political and theological challenge faced by the Korean people came together: "To me," he said in a letter from prison, "democratization and unification (of North and South Korea) has become one issue in a theological theme: reconciliation. . . . I believe that the mission of the Christian church in Korea today is to bring about national reconciliation by illuminating the tragic division—geographic and spiritual—of our people. We must put all our energy and wisdom, every resource of Christian faith, to this task." □

*Rev. Stephen Moon was imprisoned for 26 months because of his human rights work. He lives with his family in Washington, D.C.*

Text and photos by  
Maud and David Easter

## Why not talk to North Korea?



North Korean family picnicking in a Pyongyang park.

**To begin the search for peace,  
it is not necessary to like  
everything about an adversary**

Flying in a small plane from China to North Korea, we were filled with curiosity and anticipation. We would soon see with our own eyes a country unknown to most Americans. Throughout the nearly 30 years since the Korean War, the relationship of the United States with North Korea has been one of unremitting hostility. Only about 100

Americans have visited North Korea. With the exception of a handful of UN observers, the State Department has allowed no North Koreans to enter the U.S.

In the days after we landed in Pyongyang, the North Korean capital, we saw many aspects of this communist society. Like South Korea, it has a repressive government. There is no free press. Strikes are not permitted. Although we could not get exact numbers, we were told there are political prisoners.

Of particular concern to Chris-

## Why not talk to North Korea?

tians is the fact that religious freedom is severely restricted. Christian churches destroyed by American bombing during the Korean War were never rebuilt. In 1977, three members of North Korea's National Church Federation told a visiting New Zealand clergyman, Don Borrie, that thousands of Christians hold regular worship in homes. However, Borrie felt the society was strongly secularized and that Christians enjoy freedom only if they express total loyalty to the state.

A personality cult surrounds the country's president, Kim Il Sung. On the street, people wear lapel pins sporting his picture. We saw children studying his life and teachings in pre-school. We heard popular songs referring to Kim in almost religious tones: "We rely on your boundless love," and "We will live with you for 10,000 years."

We observed many achievements of which North Koreans can be

proud. While still poor, the country has a higher standard of living than China. Compared to the South Koreans we had seen, it appeared that the average North Korean is better off, in terms of economic security. Basic food costs are kept low. Housing is subsidized and costs less than 3 percent of a family's income. Medical care is free and stresses prevention. Each person receives a health exam every six months.

North Korea puts a great deal of emphasis on education. Some 80 percent of the country's young children attend child care centers. The ones we visited were clean, well equipped and well staffed. There are 11 years of free compulsory education for all children. College and higher technical training are also free, but entrance is based on competitive exams. Most adults participate in adult education programs. Even with heavy doses of political instruction at all levels, North Korea's educational achievements are impressive.

North Korea's economy stresses self-reliance. This is particularly

Nurses in training illustrate North Korea's emphasis on education.





Many women have double burden as industrial workers and homemakers.

striking in agriculture. In Pyongyang we talked with a UN food expert who explained that North Korea has become 100 percent self-sufficient in grain. This contrasts with South Korea, the traditional rice bowl, which now must import 40 percent of its needs.

Compared to traditional society, women have made major gains in North Korea. Many work outside the home. Women make up 20 percent of the National Assembly. However, men predominate in leadership positions and women work two jobs: running a home in addition to paid employment. They are far from full equality.

During our visit we came to question a number of stereotypes about the society. Americans often assume a communist country is drab. Our pictures show that North Ko-

reans, like people everywhere, appreciate color. They also enjoy music. It is educational policy that each child be taught to play at least two musical instruments.

We found the family unit to be strong. Pre-marital sex and early marriages are much discouraged. However, nearly everyone does marry eventually and parents spoke of their children with deep affection. The government favors population growth and contraceptives are not available to anyone.

It is often said that North Korea is an isolated country. It is isolated from the United States but not from much of the rest of the world. We saw many goods from Europe and Japan in addition to socialist and third world countries. North Korea has diplomatic relations with about 100 nations and participates

## Why not talk to North Korea?

in a number of UN programs and in the non-aligned movement.

In a handover from Korean War days, many people think of North Korea as a puppet of Russia. Actually, they had a falling out in the early 1960s. Since then North Korea has successfully balanced relations with its two large communist neighbors, the Soviet Union and China. Currently North Korea is diplomatically closer to Peking than to Moscow. Improved American relations with China have created an opportunity for the U.S. to reduce tensions with North Korea as well.

The question of invading South Korea remains. North Korea has strong reasons to avoid another war. The country was devastated by U.S. saturation bombing during the Korean War. North Korean leaders are well aware that another conflict risks the destruction of

everything they have accomplished. Furthermore, the situation has changed since the 1950s. South Korea is no longer defenseless. Even without U.S. support, South Korea is a formidable military power, with twice the population and twice the gross national product of North Korea.

### Formidable foes

However, as long as the military forces of South and North Korea—the fifth and sixth largest armies in the world—face each other in hostility, war could break out. The Foreign Secretary of North Korea's Communist Party outlined for us a proposal that both sides reduce their troops from over half a million each to 100,000 or less. North Korea has also suggested direct talks with the U.S. to lead to signing a peace treaty.

On the train traveling back from Pyongyang to Peking, we had many unanswered questions. Even if North Korea's peace proposals cannot be taken at face value, could not they be tested through dialogue? Why is it current U.S. policy not to talk at all with North Korea? Would not it be in the U.S. interest to explore cultural exchanges and trade? We left feeling that it is not necessary to like everything about an adversary in order to begin the search for peace. □

Maud and David Easter are two of only 100 Americans who have visited North Korea in the last 30 years.

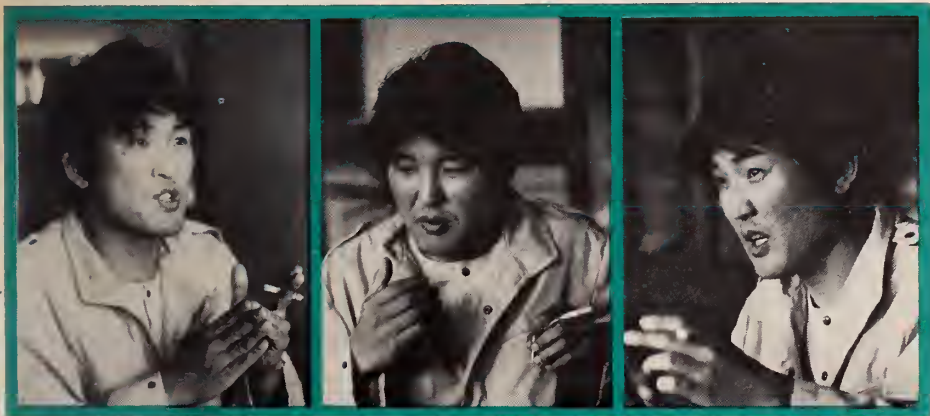


*David and Maud Easter are former staff members of the American Friends Service Committee's office in Tokyo, Japan.*

Text by Kim Chi Ha, as told to Stephen De Mott, M.M.

Photos by Eric L. Wheeler

## Reflections on liberation



Poet Kim Chi Ha believes that the real struggle in the world is for human dignity.

### **Poet condemns both communism and capitalism for neglecting the spiritual life of individuals**

*Kim Chi Ha, the 40-year-old Korean Catholic poet imprisoned for his writings critical of the government of Park Chong Hee, has been released from prison under an amnesty granted by the present government of South Korea. Here he shares some ideas developed during his months in prison.*

It seems that the whole world, every aspect of human life, has come under the influence of evil. Confrontation and constant collision are only part of the vicious circle that forces people into opposing camps.

The evil force would have us believe that the struggle is between capitalism and communism, or North and South, rich and poor. But the real struggle is for human dignity. The hard work of the poor should improve the condition of their lives. But often the harder they work, the more miserable their lives become and so they have to work even harder. Work does not improve their lives; rather, it saps their powers.

All the arts, education, etc., fill people with a sense of materialism. The inner life is destroyed. And this is true not just of Korea, but of the whole world.

The communists promise a utopia and the capitalists offer material wealth, but in the end the result

## Reflections from prison

of both is the same. They both neglect the inner life of the person and the collective life of the people. What they both offer is an illusion, the illusion of progress. If the established churches try to divide or separate the spiritual world from the social or material world, that too is an illusion.

In the early Church, the Christians broke away from the old, pagan way of living. The first step was recognition of the sinful situation. In this, the goals of Zen Buddhism and Christianity are the same: breaking artificial barriers or distinctions which divide people.

Buddhists say that if you have a pure heart you help to purify the world. The world as it is right now can be redeemed from within, sanctified from within.

Spiritual renewal and social renewal are one and the same. Groups will achieve their goal, no matter where they begin, if authentic renewal is the true goal.

Part of the problem today is that

the Church is not fulfilling its mission of being a liberating community because it is engaged in authoritarianism and dogmatism. It is necessary for new communities to arise, communities of lay people and priests. Liberation of the spirit and of society should be the mission of this new community.

As in Zen, we Christians need a *koan* (a question unsolvable by human logic alone, hence an aid to intuitive enlightenment if it becomes a subject for total concentration). In one sense, Jesus is that totally necessary *koan* for Christians. The more we concentrate on Him, the more we discover and the more that remains to be discovered.

But in order to attain liberation for all people from the vicious circle of evil, either communism or capitalism, the community of believers, the followers of Jesus, have to become a living *koan* just as the early Church was to the world of that time. And the way to liberation is to be found not "out there" somewhere, but here and now, within this vicious circle, for even here and now Jesus is present. □

Kim with his mother and Bishop Daniel Tji of Wonju.





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